

**DIRECTOR OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
LEPC REPORT
(Drafted 15-17 August 2006)**

Madison County Disaster & Emergency Plan: I have been concentrating (in between things) on getting a workable Emergency Resource list drawn up. I should have a very preliminary draft ready for this week's meeting and would appreciate additions, subtractions, updates and suggestions for improved usability.

Public Safety Communications: The Table Mountain repeater is up and running, using the Ruby Repeater frequency and tone code. We are getting some interference from Baldy, which is on the same channel, but which may (or may not) be providing much of the coverage into the south Madison valley area. The current plan is to move the Ruby Repeater equipment down to the south Madison, possibly at MVRFD FH #2, on a new frequency/tone channel we haven't worked out yet. This will probably allow us to turn Baldy off and keep it as an emergency alternative repeater if we can locate enough money to install a controller to allow remote on/off capability. Meanwhile, a new console and a new rcvr/xmtr has been ordered for Dispatch in Virginia City and the primary transmitter on Virginia City hill. These should go into place in September. We have also issued a work order to install the new Long Peak repeater but have been delayed a bit trying to get the new frequency for it. We still think we can get all three repeaters and the Virginia City work done by fall.

Related to all this but separate from it is the statewide Interoperability Montana (IM) initiative, which is currently where the vast majority of Montana's homeland security grant money is being spent. IM is building a microwave-linked, trunking capable loop around the state, concentrating initially on the interstates and the urban areas, including Helena, the highline, Missoula, the Billings/Bozeman/Butte corridor, etc. Things are looking increasingly favorable for getting a sub-loop of that microwave linkage which would incorporate Madison County (including Big Sky) within the next 2 to 3 years. At this point finding enough money to take advantage of the tremendous control and data transmission capability this could potentially bring us is very problematic, but the prospects are very interesting and we are working hard with our consortium (SCMIC) partners and our neighbors in Beaverhead county to make this happen so that if and when we can find a way to get the user equipment and find the means with which to maintain everything, we can begin to take advantage of that capability for our public safety communications system. I would be happy to discuss this in detail with anyone who might be interested in more information.

Big Sky: The Public Safety Planning Study of the Madison County portion of Big Sky established under County Resolution 32 2006 is progressing. Contract negotiations with Firescope Mid-America, a firm chosen by the Guidance Committee set up for that purpose, are currently underway. By way of refreshing everyone's memory, the objectives of this study are to determine just what the County's responsibilities (both legal and in the eyes of the people of the area) are for public safety there and how best to meet those responsibilities. The study will take several months; will involve both Gallatin & Madison county residents and entities and has the potential to have a major impact on our law enforcement, fire suppression, emergency medical service, search and rescue and other public safety arrangements. Participation by the LEPC is encouraged.

NIMS: Full integration of NIMS into our daily emergency planning and response has been and will continue to be a prominent part of Emergency Management Department activity. Several items are worthy of note:

- **ICS/NIMS Training:** Steve DiGiovanna has proven to be an invaluable resource in our NIMS training efforts. He is currently scheduled to conduct tailored NIMS/ICS training for Harrison VFD, designed to fit into the restricted training schedule that department is able to meet. Steve is available for similar tailored training for other fire departments and response

entities upon request. He is also scheduled to conduct three three hour training sessions to introduce all county government personnel to NIMS/ICS principles over the next month at the request of the Board of Commissioners.

- **NIMS Assessment:** When the result of last spring's LEPC assessment of County NIMS compliance was presented to the Board of Commissioners, they requested that the Committee update that report this September. This will need to be addressed by the LEPC very soon.
- **ICS in the Field:** My anecdotal observation is that ICS is increasingly becoming a part of the daily routine of many of our responders. I was pleased that when I arrived on scene at the Sappington Junction fire recently, the first comment I received was to point out who was Incident Command and the second was to comment about transition of command. The kind of awareness and routine utilization of the ICS structure this illustrates is fundamental to really effective response these days and we need to encourage and continue to develop it.
- **On-line training:** Slowly but surely those of us involved in emergency planning and response are complying with the Presidential mandate that we complete IC 200, IS 700 and IS 800 training. Don't forget, the latter two are available on-line and are not too time consuming..

False Alarm Ordinance: The LEPC proposal regarding fees for false alarms initiated by automatic alarm systems was presented to the Board of Commissioners on 12 June. In general, they seemed favorably disposed toward the proposal. I have been asked to come up with appropriate language for such an ordinance which could then be entered into the county enactment process. Any further input from the LEPC members would be appreciated.

SubDivision Review: The Planning Board has submitted a proposal for revision of the subdivision review fees to consideration by the Board of Commissioners now. Included therein is a major revision of the fees associated with review of the public safety impacts of the subdivision involved. Joe Husar, county Risk Mitigation Coordinator has been doing these reviews, usually with the local fire chief and this would help provide a more appropriate payment for the time and travel involved.

Sappington Fire: The Sappington Fire has been a major part of the departmental effort the last few days. We have a state County Assistance Team (CAT) and a DNRC Incident Command Team on scene along with numerous firefighters and equipment, including up to three helicopters and a fixed wing tanker at times. As of this morning, 635 acres were involved. Status updates are being provided from time to time on the County website.